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ABSTRACT

Previous studies of the residential succession process have described the patterns of succession in terms of stages defined either by the responses of the residents or by the percent of black population occupying the area. The present study approaches the investigation from an operational point of view, using a microscopic technique of data collection and analysis. A relatively small area is concentrated on, and the patterns are analyzed in terms of specific dwellings, streets, and blocks. The earlier stages of the succession process are focused on, since they give direction to the later concentrated stage. The area studied is one of the oldest inner-city neighborhoods in Buffalo, New York. Bounded physically by major traffic arteries, parks, schools, and playgrounds, it has all the qualities of a natural area. Over the years it has come to be recognized as an entity displaying both physical as well as psychological boundaries, readily identified by both residents and non-residents alike. (Author/JM)

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NEIGHBORHOOD PATTERNS OF INVASION AND SUCCESSION

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NEIGHBORHOOD PATTERNS OF INVASION AND SUCCESSION*

The Social composition of residential areas viewed over a period of time presents a picture of constant change. The neighborhood as a dynamic social unit displays varying rates and degrees of change in regard to its make-up including, among others, the socio-economic, ethnic, and racial characteristics of its residents. The process by which this composition undergoes change was called invasion and succession by the early ecologists of the "Chicago School." Adapting concepts originating in biology, Robert E. Park (1936), Ernest W. Burgess (1928) and their colleagues defined this process as the encroachment and eventual replacement of one group in the spatial position of another.

Previous studies of the residential succession process have described the patterns of succession in terms of stages defined either by the responses of the residents (Burgess, 1936; Gibbard, 1941; Wolf, 1957; Bressler, 1960; Fishman, 1961) or by the percent of black population occupying the area (Duncan and Duncan, 1957). While the former are more descriptive of the socio-psychological responses to residential invasion and succession, the latter study conducted by Duncan and Duncan attempts to operationalize the stages to allow for a more systematic analysis of the process.

The present study also approaches the investigation of the residential succession process from an operational point of view, but differs from the Duncan's study in that it utilizes a microscopic rather than a macroscopic technique of data collection and analysis. The Duncans, working with census tract data, as had previous studies, could only deal with

* The author wishes to acknowledge the advice and critical comment provided during the study by Dr. Constantine A. Yeracaris.

residential composition changes in complete census tracts. Therefore, their analysis was limited to comparative periods at ten year intervals. While this does provide a broad descriptive analysis of the succession process, it fails to describe the activity occurring at the neighborhood level, and blurs the time sequence involved in neighborhood change.[1]

In order to overcome these deficiencies, and to provide insight into the more specific aspects of the invasion and succession process, the present study concentrates on a smaller area than previous studies and analyzes the patterns of invasion and succession in terms of specific dwellings, streets, and blocks.

The earlier stages of the succession process are what give direction to the later concentrated stages. In an attempt to provide understanding regarding these neglected areas of concern, this study focuses on the initial and early stages of the residential succession process. This is not intended to deny the importance of a more extensive investigation which would follow the process through the latter stages of the present succession, and even into the initial stages of the next one. Rather it is a recognition of the fact, as revealed by the Duncans' study, that once an area is inhabited by substantial proportions of blacks (10 percent or more) it tends to move either rapidly or slowly

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1 The Duncans point out that they were unable to gather any data on the initial stages of the invasion and succession and that, "Ideally, to study residential succession in an area, one would like to have a large number of observations on the characteristics of the area in the form of a time series covering the period during which succession occurs." "When succession occurs rapidly, this may mean that an entire cycle takes place within a period between two observations, and one has, so to speak, only 'before and after snapshots' of the situation rather than the ideal 'moving picture' of the succession process." (Duncan and Duncan, 1957:111).

toward still larger proportions of black residents (Duncan and Duncan, 1957:11). Morton Grodzins also makes this point in his excellent discussion of the tipping-point concept (Grodzins, 1958: 6-7).

At the cut-off point in data collection, the percentage of black occupied dwellings in the study area was 22 percent. The succession process has accelerated beyond this point so that at the present time blacks occupy in excess of 95 percent of the dwellings.

While some neighborhoods have achieved stabilization of the succession process, this has only been accomplished through concerted effort on the part of vigorous citizen action groups to maintain an integrated neighborhood (Grier and Grier, 1966: 72-75). This has obviously not been the case in the neighborhood which was studied.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA.

The area selected for study is in Buffalo, New York, a large, northeastern, industrial city, noted for its high ethnic concentrations. As might be expected, it is one of the oldest inner-city neighborhoods. Because of the names of the streets within its boundaries (Peach, Grape, Orange, etc.), this area has come to be known as the Fruit Belt. In addition, its physical boundaries consisting of major traffic arteries, schools, parks and playgrounds have provided the area with all the criteria necessary to establish it as a natural area. Over the years it has come to be recognized as an entity displaying both physical as well as psychological boundaries. It therefore is readily identified by both residents and non-residents alike.[2]

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2 H. Laurence Ross, found that urban residents perceive the city as containing named areas bounded by such barriers to travel as parks, rivers and large streets and tend to readily identify such areas in community studies and to ascribe status functions to them. (Ross, 1962: 75-84).

This latter fact probably explains why although surrounded by large areas containing predominantly black residents, especially on the north and south, this forty block area was able to resist integration until the middle 1950's.

From its origin this neighborhood was populated almost exclusively by persons of German origin. Around 1940 this solidly cohesive neighborhood was invaded by Italian families. Then around 1954 the first sizeable numbers of blacks began to move into the area. While the Italian invasion was the first to begin the breakdown of the homogeneity of the area, the black invasion is the more extensive and is the one on which this study concentrates.[3]

METHODS

Briefly, the method employed in this study was to determine the ownership, occupancy and tenancy history of each dwelling in the area for each of the years immediately before and after the first sizeable influx of black residents in 1954. In addition, housing and racial characteristics associated with each dwelling were obtained for comparative analysis. Data on the 1,354 dwellings in the Fruit Belt for the ten year period from 1948 to 1958 adequately provide a picture of the early stages of the residential succession process in this area.

The ownership history for each dwelling was obtained from the City of Buffalo tax rolls for each year under investigation. The occupancy history was obtained from the Buffalo City Directories. From the Buffalo

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3 Other factors contributing to the eventual breakdown of the cohesiveness of the area include; the threat of coming code enforcement and urban renewal projects, the advanced age of the residents and the houses, the exodus of younger people to the suburbs, and the pressures exerted by blacks for more areas of suitable housing.

Department of Urban Renewal the following data were obtained: address of the owner or agent, race of the occupants, number of dwelling units in the dwelling, number of housing violations and the monthly rental for each dwelling unit. This information was available because of a code enforcement program carried out in the area from 1957 to 1959. This information was corroborated and supplemented by interviews conducted with older residents, social workers, ministers, and other informants living and working in the area.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Residents of the Fruit Belt, an area of predominantly one and two family houses, have always displayed a high proportion of home ownership (65 percent). After several years of black movement into the area it was apparent that the newcomers were maintaining that high proportion (60 percent). This may be explained by the assumption that blacks find it easier to purchase a house rather than rely on the rental market (Duncan and Duncan, 1957 : 15-16). It was also noted that in analyzing the assessment figures for black owned houses that they tended to purchase the larger, two-family dwellings. These income producing dwellings can help to defray the high prices often demanded of blacks during the early stages of the succession process.

The higher prices paid by blacks in regard to median monthly rental figures found in other studies held true in the Fruit Belt. Blacks paid a median monthly rental of $61.00 as compared with $40.00 for whites.

When the ownership characteristics of the 296 black occupied dwelling units are analyzed it is apparent that of the 40 percent black occupied dwellings that are not black owned, the greater percentage are

owned by absentee owners who reside outside of the Fruit Belt. Most of these absentee owners are private invidivuals; real estate or syndicate owners account for only 10 percent of the ownership of black occupied dwellings. It is interesting to note that purchase of property in the Fruit Belt by absentee owners did not occur in any sizeable numbers until 1958, well after the initial invasion had occured. It would seem, at least in this case, that the early stage of the succession process was not accompanied by real estate speculation either by firms or individuals. Transfers of properties were mainly from white occupant owners to black occupant owners.

PATTERNS OF INVASION AND SUCCESSION

Invasion By Years -- The first two black families to move into the Fruit Belt arrived in 1944 and 1945 respectively. It is likely that these families were assimilated into the neighborhood and were not perceived as the harbingers of a black invasion. The very fact that the next black families did not appear until 1949 suggests that these first two families had little direct connection with the invasion.

The invasion of the Fruit Belt can be more accurately thought of as starting in 1949 since as shown in Table 1, there were black families moving into the area steadily from that date on.

Table 1 about here

Two years, 1952 and 1954, show large increases over the number of newly occupied black dwellings in previous years. In both instances the increase amounted to more than twice the total number of newly occupied

dwellings for all previous years combined. This increase in 1952 marks the first sizable invasion of blacks into the area. The appearance of this group plus the number that appeared in 1953, no doubt accounts for the large increase in 1954 and the steadily increasing number in subsequent years.

Invasion By Streets-- The streets in the Fruit Belt are all one-way streets and provide a direct north-south route between the two largest black residential areas in the city. The movement of vehicles operated by black persons between these two areas provided a constant exposure of blacks to the residents of the area. This probably led them to become more aware and concerned with the fact that blacks were moving into the area. At any rate, an examination of the pattern of invasion by streets shows that of the major north-south streets, the three that provide the most direct connection between the adjoining large residential areas had the highest number and percentage of black occupied dwellings.

The north-south streets also carried a great deal of foot traffic as well. Groups of black youths passing through the area to use the recreational facilities on its northern border, also added to the visual exposure of blacks to the residents.

The overwhelming majority of dwellings in the Fruit Belt have large front porches. This, coupled with the fact that most lots are only 25 feet wide, leads to a great deal of interaction between neighbors and an awareness of what is taking place on the block. This "front porch culture" probably made the residents more aware of the movement of blacks through the area, especially those on foot.

This foot traffic also included black children walking to and from the elementary school in the center of the area. This study did not attempt to measure the effect of the presence of black children in the school on the invasion process, but it is evident that it is a factor to be considered when explanations are sought.

Invasion By Block Strips-- It was found that there is more identification in this area between the facing sides of a street than there is across back yards or around corners. Further, this close identification with neighbors is limited to the facing sides of the street, between cross streets, or what is defined as a block strip. The direction of identification proceeds along the lines of the direction of greatest social interaction with one's neighbors.

Since the identification in this "front porch culture" is centered on the block strip, it is only natural that an analysis of the invasion and succession pattern should proceed along these lines. To analyse it in any other way would distort the true picture of the process. For instance, an analysis done by streets or blocks would not bring out the resistance, or lack of it, to the invasion and succession process.

In some instances two dwellings are located on the same lot, one behind the other. As shown in Table 2 the discrepancy between the number of dwellings newly occupied by blacks and the number of lots is in some cases large. To proceed by number of dwellings would give the impression that more property owners sold to blacks than actually did.

Table 2 about here

Table 2 indicates that up until 1952 the pattern of invasion in the Fruit Belt was one of "sprinkling" of in-movers into the area. The first black families tended to scatter throughout the area rather than to concentrate on any one or two block strips. These early stages of the invasion pattern in this area tend to show that once an area has become susceptible or "ripe" for invasion, the in-movers follow the out-movers in whatever pattern the out-movers create. That is to say there does not appear to be any conscious effort on the part of the in-movers to select any particular dwellings; rather they occupy them as soon as they are available in any random fashion that this occurs.

In 1953 and 1954 the number of lots newly occupied by blacks were distributed almost equally between block strips that previously contained blacks and those that did not. From 1954 on the distribution takes on a "filling in" or consolidation pattern with the greatest number of incoming blacks going to block strips that were already bi-racial. It is interesting to note, however, that throughout this period of filling in, new block strips were being integrated at a constant rate. This overall pattern of "sprinkling" and "filling in" is even more apparent when the analysis is based on the number of block strips, bi-racial and white, that received new-comers each year as shown in Table 3.

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Table 3 about here

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Characteristics of Initial In-movers-- An analysis of the characteristics of initial in-movers (the first black occupants of dwellings on each block strip) adds further insight to the patterns of invasion.

It is of interest to note that of the 14 dwellings that were purchased by the initial in-movers up to 1954, seven were purchased from individual absentee owners and seven from occupant owners. It can be said then, in terms of black purchased dwellings, that the invasion of the Fruit Belt was not generated solely by absentee owners as is often suspected.

Of the landlords who were the first on their block strip to rent to blacks only two were occupant owners. Thus it is seen that if the first black family to move into a block are tenants, they are more likely to occupy a dwelling that is not occupant owned. For the occupant owner the identification with neighbors and the social pressures exerted by them will probably outweigh any other motives (for instance, high rental profits) that may influence him to be the first to allow blacks in the block strip. In terms of black rented dwellings, absentee owners play a greater role in generating an invasion.

INDEX OF INVASION

The index of invasion is a result of the attempt to reduce the overall pattern of invasion of the Fruit Belt to quantitative measures.[4]

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4 To determine the index of invasion for any given year the block strips receiving blacks during that year are first located. Next, the number of lots intervening between a newly occupied black dwelling and the closest previously occupied black dwelling is determined for each newly occupied dwelling on each block strip. In the case of a newly occupied dwelling adjacent to a previously occupied dwelling the intervening number of lots is zero. If one lot intervenes then the number is one. Similarily a newly occupied dwelling directly across the street from a previously occupied dwelling (if that is the nearest one) is counted as zero. If the dwelling across the street is white occupied then the numbering proceeds from this lot (as number one) and proceeds to the nearest newly occupied black dwelling. The mean number of total intervening lots on all block strips combined yields the index of invasion. The lower the index the greater the indication that in-movers are locating close to already established black dwellings. A comparison of index of invasion by years shows when the "sprinkling" process stops and the "filling in" process starts.

As was mentioned earlier in this paper the overall pattern that emerges from the data, is one of "sprinkling" and "filling in." The index of invasion is a means of determining when one stage of the process ends and the next begins.

This index compared with data regarding the number of in-movers locating in previously bi-racial block strips gives a good indication of the pattern that these in-movers followed to fill in the area. Table 4 shows that from 1953 on, the general pattern of in-movers was to locate near already established blacks. This of course does not give a total picture since the number of in-movers that locate in all white block strips (as shown in Table 3) is also necessary in evaluating the total invasion pattern.

Table 4 about here

In applying this index to other areas, the major direction of identification and interaction of the residents would have to be first determined. In the case of identification across back yards, or cross streets, or around corners, the index would have to be adjusted accordingly.

THE INVASION AND SUCCESSION PROCESS -- AN OVERVIEW

The pattern of invasion and succession that this study has determined starts with the "sprinkling" stage. This stage is characterized by initial in-movers settling in previously all white block strips, in dwellings that are usually large and in a run-down condition. These initial in-movers usually purchase these dwellings. If they rent, the

landlord is usually an absentee owner. The distance between these initial in-movers is quite large and usually there are only one or two on each block strip that has been invaded.

The second stage, that of the "block strip invasion", begins when whites in the proximity of the initial in-movers move out and are replaced by blacks. It is approximately at this point, when absentee owners and real estate firms purchase some of these dwellings, that the whites leave and resell or rent them to blacks. This second stage of the process starts slowly and then gains momentum as more and more white leave the area.

When the gaps between black occupied dwellings begin to close the "filling in" stage is reached. This stage is reached much sooner on those streets that are more exposed to blacks, than it is on the more "protected" streets. This protection from exposure to blacks tends to keep the later streets more cohesive and resistant to invasion. It is during this "filling in" stage that absentee ownership increases. At this point the process accelerates and when the "filling in" has isolated pockets of white resistance, the "consolidation" stage is attained.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study of the residential invasion and succession process reveals a social rather than an ecological process. The understanding of urban social organization requires an insight into the dynamics of urban growth and change, and a determination of related factors. Analysis and interpretation of the data indicate the patterns of neighborhood invasion and succession to tend to be related to socially relevant characteristics. Although there are some factors which the present study does not account

for, it does identify a number of factors which can be generalized.

As long as the study area remained a solidly cohesive ethnic neighborhood it was resistant to racial invasion. Only after it was first penetrated by other ethnic groups did it then become racially integrated. It would appear that the more homogeneous the area, the more resistant it is to groups displaying different social characteristics.

Because the study area was one of high home ownership and owner occupancy, the majority of property transfers tended to be from white occupant owners to black occupant owners. The new-comers more frequently maintained the high level of home ownership. The remainder of the dwellings which were occupied by blacks were mainly owned by individual absentee owners, with syndicate and real estate owners accounting for only a small percent of the total. At least in this neighborhood, real estate speculation was not a factor in the invasion and succession process.

The areas of initial invasion tend to be those of high visibility of in-movers, especially streets with greater amounts of in-mover vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Large front porches and the virtual absence of a front yard place residents in close proximity to sidewalks and streets. This "front porch culture" not only facilitated communication between neighbors, but also made them highly aware of activities on the block strip. Block strips where blacks were less visible tended to be more resistant to integration.

Analysis of the process of residential invasion and succession in this study indicates that the out-movers, rather than the in-movers

determine the overall patterns. Further study of the motives for moving out of the neighborhood could provide insight into the social and psychological factors which help determine these patterns.

While the present study overcomes the macroscopic limitations of previous studies it does not take into account the influence of recent legislation involving considerable change in the social, political and economic conditions involving minority relations and housing. Further research is needed which will investigate the patterns of residential invasion in neighborhoods which have more recently experienced the process.

Table 1

Number of Dwellings Newly Occupied
by Blacks, by Year
Fruit Belt, 1948-1958

Year	Number
Before 1948...	2
1948.....	0
1949.....	2
1950.....	2
1951.....	1
1952.....	9
1953.....	7
1954.....	27
1955.....	32
1956.....	56
1957.....	75
1958.....	99
Total..	296

Table 2

Distribution of Lots Newly Occupied by Blacks by Racial Composition of Block Strips, by Year, Fruit Belt, 1948-1958

Year	Number of Dwellings	Number of Lots	Racial Composition of Block Strip	
			Bi-Racial	White
Before 1948..	2	2	0	2
1948.....	0	0	0	0
1949.....	2	2	1	1
1950.....	2	2	1	1
1951.....	1	1	0	1
1952.....	9	8	1	7
1953.....	7	7	4	3
1954.....	27	23	11	12
1955.....	32	28	23	5
1956.....	56	53	44	9
1957.....	75	68	60	8
1958.....	99	91	77	14

Table 3

Racial Composition of Block Strips Receiving Incoming Blacks, by Years Fruit Belt, 1948-1958

Year	Racial Composition of Block Strip	
	Bi-Racial	White
Before 1948...	0	2
1948.....	0	0
1949.....	1	1
1950.....	0	2
1951.....	0	1
1952.....	1	7
1943.....	4	3
1954.....	6	9
1955.....	11	4
1956.....	18	9
1957.....	22	7
1958.....	22	11

Table 4

In-Movers Locating on Bi-Racial Block Strips and Index of Invasion, by Year, Fruit Belt, 1948-1958

Year	In-Movers	Index of Invasion
Before 1948...	0	0.0
1948.....	0	0.0
1949.....	1	4.0
1950.....	0	0.0
1951.....	0	0.0
1952.....	1	14.0
1953.....	4	7.8
1954.....	11	4.0
1955.....	23	3.9
1956.....	44	2.2
1957.....	60	1.5
1958.....	77	1.0

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